SWAMI RAMANAND TERTH MARATHWADA UNIVERSITY, NANDED

A synopsis of the Thesis (for registration) for the Ph.D. Degree in the subject English

PORTRAYAL OF NEW WOMEN IN PREETI SHENOY'S SELECTED NOVELS

Under the Faculty of Humanities
Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded

Researcher
SONALI GAUTAM KAMBLE
Udgir, Dist.Latur

Research Supervisor
Dr. KAMLAKAR GAVANE
Dept of English
Maharashtra Udaygiri Mahavidyalaya,
Udgir, Dist. Latur

Research Centre
P.G. Department and Research Centre in English
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedpur

MARCH-2022

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Introduction

Literature has always been a mirror to the different forms of human life. It includes all human relationships. It highlights the various social aspects of human world with a keen insight for the improvement in society. It reflects not only the social reality but also shapes the complex ways in which men and women adjust themselves, their interpersonal relationships and their perception of the socio-cultural reality.

Novel is a modern form of literature which is originated in the early 18th century and it focuses mainly on character development. It is the study of the human psyche. In reality novels always give us a new perspective towards life. As a novelist women have always been self defining. They have been deeply and perennially aware of their individual identities and experiences. Novelist like Kamla Markandaya, Chitra Banarjee, Kamla Das, Manju Kappor, Namita Gokhale, Kavita Kane, Nayantara Sehgal, Arundhati Roy have depicted women's perspective towards society. They exposed the real picture of Indian society and revealed the struggle of Indian women to create their own identity.

Preety Shenoy is one of the most recent and prominent Indian women novelists effectively portrays the issues of women. Her contribution towards women empowerment and the realistic depiction of their lives is undeniable. She boldly depicts and explicitly challenges the male domination and the pressure experienced by the women in the society. Most of the women's

lives are still vulnerable and conservative when compared with few modern women in the society. Women are still not capable to express their own opinions regarding their lives. But now, women have been slowly trying to stand for their self. Preety Shenoy is one of the most prominent writers who constantly projects the concepts of liberty of women through her fictional and non--fictional works. Her novels deal with her own experiences as well as the experiences of many people in the society. The protagonists of her novels are mostly depicted as bold and beautiful women who daringly challenge the society with their strength. They play an important role in the family and society by making them equal to their male counterparts both mentally and financially. Preety Shenoy has mastered the art of storytelling as Time of India has acclaimed her as an "excellent story teller."

Her works:

1) 34 Bubble Game and Candies
2) Life is what you make it
3) Tea for two and a Piece of Cake
4) The Secret Wish List
5) It Happens For A Reason
6) It's all in the Planets
7) A Hundred Little Flames
8) The Rule Breakers
9) Wake up, Life is Calling

Hypothesis

Reflecting into the "Veda Purana" of Indian culture, women is being worshiped such as LAXMI MAA, goddess of wealth, SARASWATI MAA, for wisdom; DURGA MAA for power. The status of women in India needs to address the issue of

empowering women. Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, social, political, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. The novels of Preety Shenoy express the changing life of women in her works. They are *Life is what you make it, Wake up, Life is calling, It happens for a reason, The Rule Breakers, The Secret Wish List, Tea for two and a piece of cake*. The present work aims to study the portrayal of newwomen in Preeti Shenoy's novels.

Portrayal of New Women in Preeti Shenoy's Selected Novels

Life is what you make it

Life is what you make it is mostly set in Kerala in the 1990s. The story opens in a mental institution where the protagonist of the novel. Ankita Sharma, is apparently brought to unwillingly by her parents. She is 21, good looking and smart, and yet she is there among many people with listless looks and lethargic bodies. The story starts with the protagonists Ankita Sharma, who lives with her parents in Kerala and has a boyfriend which name is Vaibhav. But after the transfer of her father they go to Cochin and start her graduation from women college St.Agne. Vaibhav was her boyfriend and the exchanged letters to each other. She was very happy at the new place and with friends. But she did not know that her life would change completely after that, she meets Abhishek who is a nice boy and likes her, to obey everything, respect her, all of this was making her proud. But on the other hand, she also feels that she is betraying Vaibhav. Abhishek falls in love with Ankita madly and write a letter to Ankita and expresses his intense feeling towards Ankita. Suvi convinces Ankita to meet with Abhishek. Ankita was a brilliant student and want to achieve something in professional life. So career is her priority. On the other hand

Abhishek loves Ankita and can't live without her and proposed her for marriage. Ankita's life had started at a turning point which even Ankita had no idea. She rejects his proposal of marriage. And next day she got the news that Abhishek has suicide.

Somewhere, Ankita blames herself. It was an unbelievable thing for her and she was not accepting this thing. She had locked herself in a room and avoids everything around her. Now she sees only hopelessness and darkness in her life. The most painful thing that she has tried to attempt suicide twice. Then her parents understood her mental condition and concerned with a psychiatrist. In the asylum she was on medication, psychotherapy as well as electroconvulsive therapy. Then Dr.Madhusudan comes in her life like an angel. He always tried to motivate her with inspirational stories. He suggests her to take bipolar disorder as her strengths and assures her that creativity is other symptoms of bipolar disorder and she should use her talent of painting and writing. She was improving day by day. Her will power and determination help her to overcome over her fear. And one day she goes out from the asylum with new life and new journey. This story portrays the changing life of Ankita from darkness to the bright area of life by her will power and determination.

Wake up, Life is calling

Wake up, Life is calling is the sequel of *Life Is What You Make It.* It tells Ankita story after she deals with bipolar disorder. The first book ended with Ankita emerging out of the mental hospital after surviving two suicide attempts. She is in the loving company of her parents. She leaves here MBA course and starts her new life by enrolling in a creative writing class, which she

always wanted to do. Ankita restarts her life and befriends Parul and Janki at college, trouble starts brewing up when she discovers a book in the library which consumes her into a terrifying darkness. At the same time, her ex-boyfriend resurfaces in her life bringing in more trouble. Desperate to fight all the negativity around her, she starts penning her thoughts in a journal. The novel revolves around the topics of mental health, truth and friendship. It also reinforces the power of positive thinking and how it can change our lives. The gripping narrative demonstrates with gentle wisdom how by changing our thoughts, we can change our life itself.

It Happens For A Reason

This is a representative work of art which hails woman's independence. The protagonist is depicted as a strong-willed character who leads a contrasting life against the backdrop of societal prejudices. Through the character of Vipasha, meaning a bold women, Preeti Shenoy portrays a girl who chooses an unconventional path and is also ready to face the consequences of her actions. She fells proud in living an independent life as she earns by herself and supports her family with no one else to support her financially. Vipasha's life changes at the end because of her son's accident and this creates a path to get reunited her with her husband Ankush. Later Aryan, Ankush and Vipasha. Vipasha later qualifies herself as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine whereas Aryan continues his studies in Cambridge University. *It Happens For a Reason* realistically depicts the suffering of woman named Vipasha and leads her life with a strong independent mind without anyone's support to prove herself in the society. This novel talks about a single

mother Vipasha, her suffering and challenges that a single mother has to face in India.

The Rule Breakers

The book is divided into four parts that are the rules, playing by the rules, bending the rules and *The Rule Breakers*. Each part begins with apt meaningful quotes about rules. The story deals with siblings bond, societal issues, love, friendship, marriage, hard work and education with interesting twists and turns. The protagonist of the story is Veda, studious, smart and sincere harbers big dreams for the future. But her conservative middle class parents arrange a marriage for her, and the twenty-year-old discovers that she has no say in the matter. Forced to leave behind an idyllic life in the hill town of Joshimath filled with conservations and pleasurable times with her siblings, and her best friend, the handsome Suraj-she puts aside her ambitions and moves into a flat in Pune with an indifferent husband and a mother-in-law.

Though brought up to be quiet and obedient, Veda chafes at the meaninglessness of her existence and struggles to cope with the unexpected loneliness she is engulfed in. Then, amidst the dark clouds of stagnation and despondency. Veda carves out the unlikeliest of silver linings. Veda gets involved with 'Sankalp'-an organization to promote learning among under-privileged children. Veda sees a sense of purpose creeping into her life finally.

The Secret Wish List

The book *Secret Book List* is a fascinating story of a woman who tries to regain control of her life and fight against the matters that have made her life boring and monotonous. This story is a quest of finding the 'true self' and battling with the

external world. The protagonist of the story is Diskha, a 35 year old lay lives with Sandeep and Abhay. Sandeep is an insensitive husband whose main priority in life is his work and his personal comfort. Diskha's 9 year old son Abhay is a clever boy. During these 15 years of marriage she spent her life by doing house chores, feeding her husband and kid and all those things which suited an ideal house wife. She thought that would make her parents proud.

Now there appears her cousin Vibha who finds Diksha's life so boring. She points out that Diksha has become a mere maidservant. Vibha says Diksha had forgotten to live her own life. Now Diksha starts thinking over it and she too feels that she had done nothing in her life other than producing a child. Finally Vibha provokes her to write down her *Secret Wish List*. As Disksha writes down her wish list and starts working on her wish list, her life beging to change. The insensitive nature of Sandeep strongly pushes her towards fulfilling her hidden wishes. She gets into a totally new journey of her life.

Tea for two and a Piece of Cake

The story features Nisha as the protagonist. She is portrayed by Preeti Shenoy as women who feels plain, imperfect, and plump, and as women in whom no male would take interest in. Life throws a loop one day when she loses her job, which she valued more than anything else in her life. And just as she relinquishes all hope, fate sends Nisha a life saver in the form of Samir Sharma. Alas, the mundaneness of domestic life throws a new wrench into Nisha's happy life. Slowly but surely, her relationship with Samir begins to change, and even more so when two children come into the picture. After spending eight years of marital bliss and the security that comes with marriage.

Samir's announcement comes crashing down on Nisha and her world collapses. Samir revels that he wants to leave Nisha for another women.

After recovering from the shock, Nisha struggles to gather herself together and leaves with her children. It is when her friend Akash enters the picture, that the plot of *Tea For Two And A Piece of Cake* changes to a positive tone. Nisha regains her self confidence. It is a story of brave female character named Nisha. This story depicts a reflection of a changing life of woman named Nisha by her courage and willingness to prove herself in the patriarchal society.

Objectives of the Research

The present research have the following objectives.

1) To study women characters in the novels of Preeti Shenoy
2) To know the need of women empowerment
3) To understand new women in the novels of Preeti Shenoy
4) To explain how the novels/works are related to the women's challenges and achievement.
5) To offer useful suggestions in the light of conclusion.

Importance of the Study

Present study/research is significant and important for many reasons. It will help to understand challenges, problems and sufferings with reference to women. Preeti Shenoy's novels are worth to be considered as a study of women perspective.

Review of Literature

1) Sharah Balaji (2020) Thirst For Freedom and Inequalities of Women in Preeti Shenoy's *It Happens For A Reason* focuses on the need and importance of women emancipation and the inequalities they face both in their families and in the society.

2) Prema S., Dr. Aruna Arputhamalar, R. Manikandan(2020) Nuts and Bolts of Psychological Realism in Preeti Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It* : A Vestige of Hope tries examine the lements of psychological realism in the fictional narration of Preeti Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It*.

3) Tripti Lakra (2016) A Vision of Women as a Protagonist in Preeti Shenoy's Novel explains that her female protagonists are neither dominant nor submissive; they are neither strong nor weak hearted : they are realistic.

4) D. Pandeeswari, A. Hariharasudan, Nishad Nawaz (2021), The Intertextualistic phenomenon in Preeti Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It, It Happens For A Reason* and *A Hundred Little Flames* investigated the intertextual element in the select text of Preeti Shenoy.

Research Methodology

The proposed research topic will depend upon primary sources and the secondary sources, articles, research papers and reviews in journals and magazines, biographical details of the writer and the interviews. The descriptive and analytical methods will be followed during thesis writing.

Scope and Limitations

Indian novel in English is the broad area of study. Preeti Shenoys highlight the women perspective in her novels. She describes challenges, problems, sufferings and the hope and determination of women. Therefore the present research study has a wider scope for studying fiction related to women issues in the novels of Preeti Shenoy.

The researcher will study six novels of Preeti Shenoy which are as follows:

1) Life is what you make it
2) Wake up, Life is Calling
3) It Happens For A Reason
4) The Rule Breakers
5) The Secret Wish List
3) Tea for two and a Piece of Cake

The present research study has also some limitations. It is restricted to her selected six novels only.

A Tentative Chapter Scheme

The present thesis will be developed into eight chapters given below:

I Introduction
II Portrayal of New Women in *Life is what you make it*
III Portrayal of New Women in *Wake up, Life is Calling*
IV Portrayal of New Women in *It Happens For A Reason*
V Portrayal of New Women in *The Rule Breakers*
VI Portrayal of New Women in *The Secret Wish List*
VII Portrayal of New Women in *Tea for two and a Piece of Cake*
VIII Suggestions and Conclusion

Probable date of completion of Work

The present research is proposed to be completed within the time limit as stipulated by Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded.

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Place :

Date : / /2022

Research Supervisor
Dr. Kamlakar Gavane
Dept. of English
M.U Mahavidyalaya, Udgir
Tq.Udgir Dist.Latur

Researcher
Sonali Gautam Kamble
Udgir, Dist.Latur